

CHECKLIST ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

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| Project Name: | Carr Alternative Practice. AP-45-03-21 |
| Proposed Implementation Date | 08/01/2021 |
| Proponent: | Cody Carr/NRCS |
| Location: | S24, T20N, R27W, N2NW |
| County: | Sanders |

I. TYPE AND PURPOSE OF ACTION

Cody Carr/NRCS is requesting to thin trees/salvage blow-down using an existing ford across a Class 2 stream (See Attachment A-1). He also wishes to operate equipment in the SMZ to rip unneeded roads in the SMZ and use an excavator to scatter slash piles in the SMZ left from the previous owner.

Harvest methods would be ground based with a rubber tire skidder and excavator. All trees would be limbed before being skidded across ford. All limbs and slash produced from harvest activities would be removed from channel immediately.

The SMZ for this stream extends 50 from the channel for a total width of approximately 100 feet (See Attachment A-1). Disturbance would be minimized in the SMZ and channel of the Class 2 stream by only conducting crossing operations when Class 2 stream is dewatered. The number of designated crossing locations would be limited to one. Any debris in crossing after skidding would be removed and crossing returned to as close to original condition as possible.

II. PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

1. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT, AGENCIES, GROUPS OR INDIVIDUALS CONTACTED:

Provide a brief chronology of the scoping and ongoing involvement for this project.

Neighboring landowners have been informed of the type and purpose of action.

2. OTHER GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES WITH JURISDICTION, LIST OF PERMITS NEEDED:

Property is in a conservation easement through the USDA-NRCS who controls vegetation management on the easement.

3. ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED:

Action 1: Crossings of the Class 2 stream would be allowed after water quit flowing for the season. Trees would be skidded with the leading end suspended. Sub-merchantable trees and brush would be left except where necessary to facilitate stream crossing. All new brush piles would be constructed outside of SMZ and all existing brush piles in the SMZ would be scattered with an excavator. Ripping of existing roads in SMZ would occur concurrent with logging.

No Action: No blowdown or any other trees would be harvested West of the SMZ. No stream crossings would be allowed. No mitigation of existing slash piles in the SMZ would occur.

III. IMPACTS ON THE PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

- *RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.*
- *Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.*
- *Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.*

4. GEOLOGY AND SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE:

Consider the presence of fragile, compactable or unstable soils. Identify unusual geologic features. Specify any special reclamation considerations. Identify any cumulative impacts to soils.

Soils are gravelly-silt-loam glacial deposits. Action 1 requires dry conditions that would minimize disturbance to soils and vegetation. No turning or spinning of wheels/tracks would be allowed in the SMZ. No machines allowed closer than 15 feet to the OHWM unless using a designated crossing.

5. WATER QUALITY, QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION:

Identify important surface or groundwater resources. Consider the potential for violation of ambient water quality standards, drinking water maximum contaminant levels, or degradation of water quality. Identify cumulative effects to water resources.

The proposed action would cross a Class 2 stream at an existing ford. Alternative Practice would require that stream channel have no water while skidding occurs. All slash deposited in channel will be removed concurrent with logging. The stream channel is very rocky and there will be very little, if any impact to water quality.

6. AIR QUALITY:

What pollutants or particulate would be produced? Identify air quality regulations or zones (e.g. Class I air shed) the project would influence. Identify cumulative effects to air quality.

Project would involve minor amounts of slash burning. Slash from the whole logging operation will be treated during the fall open burn period. No significant impacts would occur.

7. VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY:

What changes would the action cause to vegetative communities? Consider rare plants or cover types that would be affected. Identify cumulative effects to vegetation.

No significant impacts. Action 1 alternative requires dry conditions to protect soil and vegetation within the SMZ.

Non-merch, brush and leave trees would be protected to the fullest extent possible. Bank edge trees and trees that have naturally fallen across stream would be left to provide shade, coarse woody debris, and sediment filtration.

Current stand is comprised of an overstocked stand with a large component of suppressed Douglas - fir in combination with healthy and vigorous Ponderosa Pine and Western Larch. Proposed thinning/salvage would promote seral species and trend towards a more historical stand condition.

8. TERRESTRIAL, AVIAN AND AQUATIC LIFE AND HABITATS:

Consider substantial habitat values and use of the area by wildlife, birds or fish. Identify cumulative effects to fish and wildlife.

No significant impacts. Alternative Action 1 will improve the health of the timber stand and improve the overall habitat for wildlife.

9. UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES:

Consider any federally listed threatened or endangered species or habitat identified in the project area. Determine effects to wetlands. Consider Sensitive Species or Species of special concern. Identify cumulative effects to these species and their habitat.

No significant impacts. Alternative Action 1 will likely have no impact on any Grizzly Bear, Bull Trout or Cutthroat Trout activity in the general area.

10. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES:

Identify and determine effects to historical, archaeological or paleontological resources.

None present.

11. AESTHETICS:

Determine if the project is located on a prominent topographic feature, or may be visible from populated or scenic areas. What level of noise, light or visual change would be produced? Identify cumulative effects to aesthetics.

No significant impacts. The proposed site will not be visible unless you walk up to it.

12. DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AIR OR ENERGY:

Determine the amount of limited resources the project would require. Identify other activities nearby that the project would affect. Identify cumulative effects to environmental resources.

No significant impacts.

13. OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL DOCUMENTS PERTINENT TO THE AREA:

List other studies, plans or projects on this tract. Determine cumulative impacts likely to occur as a result of current private, state or federal actions in the analysis area, and from future proposed state actions in the analysis area that are under MEPA review (scoped) or permitting review by any state agency.

None are known.

| IV. IMPACTS ON THE HUMAN POPULATION |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>RESOURCES potentially impacted are listed on the form, followed by common issues that would be considered.</i>• <i>Explain POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATIONS following each resource heading.</i>• <i>Enter "NONE" if no impacts are identified or the resource is not present.</i> |

14. HUMAN HEALTH AND SAFETY:

Identify any health and safety risks posed by the project.

No significant impacts.

15. INDUSTRIAL, COMMERCIAL AND AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES AND PRODUCTION:

Identify how the project would add to or alter these activities.

Timber harvest would provide additional logs, continuing industrial production in the Western Montana area.

16. QUANTITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF EMPLOYMENT:

Estimate the number of jobs the project would create, move or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to the employment market.

People are currently employed in the wood products industry in this region. Due to the relatively small size of this project, there will be no measurable cumulative impact from this proposed action on employment.

17. LOCAL AND STATE TAX BASE AND TAX REVENUES:

Estimate tax revenue the project would create or eliminate. Identify cumulative effects to taxes and revenue.

Due to the relatively small size of this project, there will be no measurable effects on tax revenues.

18. DEMAND FOR GOVERNMENT SERVICES:

Estimate increases in traffic and changes to traffic patterns. What changes would be needed to fire protection, police, schools, etc.? Identify cumulative effects of this and other projects on government services

Log trucks hauling to the mill would result in temporary traffic increase on Swamp Cr. Rd. This increase is a normal contributor to the activities of the local community and industrial base and cannot be considered a new or increased source.

19. LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS:

List State, County, City, USFS, BLM, Tribal, and other zoning or management plans, and identify how they would affect this project.

There are no Plans that would be impacted by this proposed activity.

20. ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES:

Identify any wilderness or recreational areas nearby or access routes through this tract. Determine the effects of the project on recreational potential within the tract. Identify cumulative effects to recreational and wilderness activities.

Use is expected to remain the same following the project. Recreational areas and wilderness are not accessed through this tract.

21. DENSITY AND DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION AND HOUSING:

Estimate population changes and additional housing the project would require. Identify cumulative effects to population and housing.

NA

22. SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND MORES:

Identify potential disruption of native or traditional lifestyles or communities.

NA

23. CULTURAL UNIQUENESS AND DIVERSITY:

How would the action affect any unique quality of the area?

NA

24. OTHER APPROPRIATE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCUMSTANCES:

Estimate the return to the trust. Include appropriate economic analysis. Identify potential future uses for the analysis area other than existing management. Identify cumulative economic and social effects likely to occur as a result of the proposed action.

NA

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| EA Checklist Prepared By: | Name: Nathan D. Cole | Date: 07/23/2021 |
| | Title: Plains Unit Service Forester | |

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| V. FINDING |
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25. ALTERNATIVE SELECTED: The Action Alternative is selected for implementation.

26. SIGNIFICANCE OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS: No significant impacts were identified.

27. NEED FOR FURTHER ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS:☐

EIS

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More Detailed EA

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No Further Analysis

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| EA Checklist Approved By: | Name: David M. Olsen |
| | Title: Plains Unit Manager |
| Signature: <i>David M. Olsen</i> | |
| Date: July 30, 2021 | |

Carr Alternative Practice

N.C. 07/26/21

